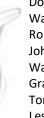
1979 Round 2 Saturday 31st March Lidcombe Oval

Western Suburbs 22

def.

Balmain 12



Don MOSELEY
Wayne SMITH
Ron BRODRICK
John DORAHY
Warren BOLAND
Graeme O'GRADY
Tom RAUDONIKIS (c)
Les BOYD
Ray BROWN
Bob COOPER
Bill CLOUGHESSY
Jack JEFFRIES
Bruce GIBBS

Fullback
Wing
Centre
Centre
Wing
Five-eighth
Half
Lock
Second Row
Second Row
Front Row
Hooker
Front Row
Replacement

Allan McMAHON
Wayne MIRANDA
Dennis BENDALL
Wayne WIGHAM
Larry COROWA
Les MARA
Greg OLIPHANT (c)
Gary SPEARS
Steve LAVERS
Mick LIUBINSKAS
David GRANT
Frank MARINO
ROD MORRIS
Steve FREWIN

Tries

Goals

Tom RAUDONIKIS

Les BOYD

Brian COOK

John DORAHY (8)

Les MARA

Allan McMAHON

Wayne MIRANDA (3)

Match Description

Balmain: Full-back: A McMahon; three-quarters: W Miranda, D Bendall, W Wigham, L Corowa; five-eighth: L Mara; half: G Oliphant (c); forwards: G Spears, S Lavers, M Liubinskas, D Grant, F Marino, R Morris

Western Suburbs: Full-back: D Moseley; three-quarters: W Smith, R Brodrick, J Dorahy, W Boland; five-eighth: G O'Grady; half: T Raudonikis (c); forwards: L Boyd, R Brown, R Cooper, W Cloughessy, J Jeffries, B Gibbs Referee: D McDonald (Rugby League Week 5th April 1979)

Balmain coach Ron Willey was bitingly critical of referee Don McDonald after his team were beaten 22-12 by Western Suburbs at Lidcombe Oval. Willey, who usually never criticises referees, had some harsh words to say about McDonald's handling of the match. "That was murder out there," Willey fumed after the match. "There is no way you can play football when things like that happen." Willey was referring to the massive penalty count against his team. McDonald awarded 19 penalties to Wests and eight to Balmain. Dorahy kicked eight goals from 10 attempts. A concerted effort has been made this season to try to improve scrummaging. But after watching some of the efforts yesterday it seems the move has failed dismally. The scrums were as bad as ever, probably worse in some instances. It seemed obvious McDonald was not getting the full cooperation of the players. Unless this happens all the best intentions of cleaning up scrummaging will fail. Perhaps it would have been better for the 10,856 spectators if McDonald had got rid of the troublesome ones in the scrums. Wests showed what formidable opponents they are on their home ground with their victory, their 12th in succession at Lidcombe since May, 1976. It looked as though they would be well-beaten when Balmain scored some fine tries to lead 10-4. But the remarkable Tom Raudonikis engineered a shock try just before half-time that put Wests right back in the match. There had been a strong Wests' raid when a forward pass went undetected. Balmain were penalised and committed the cardinal sin when they trooped back towards their line, turning their backs. Raudonikis spotted this and quickly called for a play with Dorahy taking a quick tap, passing to him and he raced over unopposed. Despite all the criticism of McDonald's handling of the game the major criticism must be against Balmain for committing this schoolboy mistake. Four penalties in the first four minutes of the second half put Wests right on the attack. Dorahy kicked his fourth goal to put his team ahead 11-10 and from then on Balmain were never really in it. The crunch came 14 minutes from the end when lock Les Boyd shrugged off a couple of high tackles and plunged over. Boyd did well to stay on the field. He was knocked senseless in a tackle eight minutes after the start and it was two minutes before he could get back on his feet. He had a nasty gash in his mouth and was still dazed as he lay on the table after the game. "I was worried about him when I saw his legs start to twitch," Raudonikis said. But Boyd stayed on and his strength carried him over for the match-clinching try. Balmain had looked impressive in the first half when they scored their two tries. There was good lead-up work in both. In the first Greg Oliphant and Les Mara combined to give Allan McMahon a clear run to the line. Rod Morris and Gary Spears found the soft underbelly of Wests was up the centre and they made massive gains in two runs. This led to the second try, scored by Les Mara, backing up Steve Lavers. For the rest of the match, it was a scrappy disjointed effort that brought little joy for the crowd of 10,856. (The Sun-Herald 1st April 1979)

Notes: Balmain coach Ron Willey was bitterly disappointed with the refereeing and it was a match which lacked continuity because of the flow of scrum penalties. Mick Liubinskas, now playing for Balmain, was off injured after ten minutes. Les Boyd was flattened after eight minutes and did well to recover to score a late powerhouse try. Dorahy and Raudonikis were both outstanding and Dorahy's eight goals were critical. Ray Brown's defence was also impressive.

